



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## ART. VI. — CRITICAL NOTICES.

1. — *The Old Régime in Canada.* By FRANCIS PARKMAN. Boston : Little, Brown, & Co. 1874.

IN the series of works which have placed Mr. Parkman among the first of American historical writers, this volume deserves to rank highest. This is to be understood, however, as the estimate of a literary critic only, not as that of the public. That book will of course have the most readers which interests or amuses the largest number, and it is very possible that more than one of Mr. Parkman's previous volumes have a more absorbing and more consecutive interest than this. By natural inclination and cast of mind Mr. Parkman has an objective way of dealing with history. He prefers to follow action rather than to meditate upon it, to relate rather than to analyze, to describe the adventures of individuals rather than the slow and complicated movements of society. This lends to his books a freshness and a simplicity of structure which are very agreeable, and which in turn suit well the general subject he has chosen. In following out this subject, he has now, however, entered a wider field of thought. The present volume deals with matters which, if not themselves of the highest philosophical interest, are still on one side at least illustrative of great and permanent principles in political science. The story he tells is curious and unusual. The annals of America are rich in illustrations of the various methods by which new states may be created. Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, Massachusetts, have each furnished striking examples of experiments in colonization and of the results which different processes may attain. But in each of these cases, even where, as in New York, the interests of the Colony were most subordinate to the interests of European governments or corporations, a wide range of independent action was still allotted to the colonists themselves, who were left to work out their own destinies so far as their aims did not clash with more powerful political or commercial interests at home. To complete the series of these experiments on human nature, and to fill up one great void in the subject, an example was needed of what could be done by the faithful effort of a truly paternal government to found and support a new state on principles of protection. Such a government, at least with reference to Canada, was that of Louis XIV. The principles on which he acted and the motives by which he was influenced appear to have been as elevated and as honest as human nature can ever hope to

attain. His ambition, in this instance at all events, was laudable and to a certain extent justifies his claim to the title of Great. Holding as he did strong opinions as to the nature of government, the necessity of a union between Church and State, the importance of religion as part of a well-ordered society, and the unconditional but if possible voluntary submission of the people to the will of their king and their church, he undertook to realize these theories in a practical form in the New World, far away from the possibility of interference. Mr. Parkman describes the colony as he ruled it. A line of dwellings ranged along the river-shores, with the dense wilderness behind them, and at Quebec a cluster of some seventy houses, contained the population which was to form the future state. A population so situated, exposed on every side to the temptations of savage life, and pushed by many motives to the wildest sort of liberty, was considered and treated by Louis as though it were a model farm within the park of Versailles. The theories of paternal government and the facts of natural liberty never came into sharper contrast. Mr. Parkman has drawn these contrasts with great skill; his work is that of an artist. On the one side he collects all the curious details which an elaborate search through the French archives and elsewhere has brought to light; in regard to the king's care for the colony; his lavish expenditure; his minute instructions to the royal officials; and his religious zeal for the eternal welfare of those who were so peculiarly dependent on his bounty. On the other side are described in strong colors the natural forces which were unceasingly in action to neutralize the king's efforts and to undo his work. Of these the two most potent appear to have been the beaver-trade and the Indian women, although a natural antipathy to the dull and penurious life of the *habitant* lay at the foundation of the uncontrollable restlessness. How serious the defection was, and how deeply the morals of this carefully guarded community were affected, is told by Mr. Parkman in the words of the original documents. "The intendant Duchesneau reported that eight hundred men out of a population of less than ten thousand souls had vanished from sight in the immensity of a boundless wilderness. Whereupon the king ordered that any person going into the woods without a license should be whipped and branded for the first offence, and sent for life to the galleys for the second." The penalty of death was added, but equally without avail. "You are aware, Monseigneur" (writes Denonville), "that the *coueurs de bois* are a great evil, but you are not aware how great this evil is. It deprives the country of its effective men; makes them indocile, debauched, and incapable of discipline, and turns them into pre-

tended nobles, wearing the sword and decked out with lace, both they and their relations, who all affect to be gentlemen and ladies. As for cultivating the soil, they will not hear of it. This, along with the scattered condition of the settlements, causes their children to be as unruly as Indians, being brought up in the same manner." Of the morals of this class of men, some idea may be formed from the curious letter of the Père Carheil dated at "Michilimakina, le 30 d'Aoust, 1702," and given in the original by Mr. Parkman, Appendix H. The particulars given by the holy father were too strong for Mr. Parkman to translate into his text, and the curious had best look them up for themselves. The sum is that "*tous les villages de nos Sauvages ne sont plus que des cabarets pour l'ivrognerie et des Sodomes pour l'impureté.*" "It was a curious scene when a party of *coureurs de bois* returned from their roving. Montreal was their harboring-place, and they conducted themselves much like the crew of a man-of-war paid off after a long voyage. As long as their beaver-skins lasted they set no bounds to their riot. Every house in the place, we are told, was turned into a drinking-shop. The new-comers were bedizened with a strange mixture of French and Indian finery; while some of them, with instincts more thoroughly savage, stalked about the streets as naked as a Pottawattamie or a Sioux. The clamor of tongues was prodigious, and gambling and drinking filled the day and the night. When at last they were sober again, they sought absolution for their sins, nor could the priests venture to bear too hard on their unruly penitents, lest they should break wholly with the Church and dispense thenceforth with her sacraments."

"One cannot but remember," says Mr. Parkman in commenting upon the unruliness of the Canadians whom twenty-eight companies of regular troops could not keep in order even in 1736, "that in a neighboring colony, far more populous, perfect order prevailed, with no other guardians than a few constables chosen by the people themselves." But while admitting the force of this curious and dramatic contrast, one must also remember that the "order" of New England was in the eyes of Louis XIV. and ninety-nine Europeans in every hundred, the height and license of disorder, anarchy, and wickedness. Even in England few persons indeed could have been found to defend and justify the institutions or the order of Massachusetts Bay. One must judge a creation to some extent by the objects of its authors. The first object of the French monarch appears to have been to found a French society in the New World, which should reflect and support his ideas of obedience and docility in politics and religion. Commercial and military success belonged more peculiarly

to the government at home. In spite of the difficulties he encountered, in spite of *coureurs de bois*, drunkenness, the climate, the English, and all economical laws, it cannot be said that the experiment failed. On the contrary, its remarkable and permanent success is the very point which makes it worth studying at all. One cannot deny that the character stamped by Louis upon this favorite political creation has been on the whole the most permanent of all the achievements of that once great monarch. The exciting adventures which Mr. Parkman loves to relate, and which gain so much under his touch, the daring exploits of Jesuits and *gentilshommes*, the vices and lawlessness of the *coureurs de bois*, were but the more or less inevitable consequences, the appendages, and one might almost say the dramatic *mise en scène*, which introduced the new society to existence. The real subject of interest, which survived Jesuits, Indians, and all the external forms of its original foundation, which survived conquest itself, and has proved the solidity of its foundation by preserving the stamp of Louis XIV. through all the vicissitudes of a century of alien rule, the true core of Canadian history is of necessity the quiet and industrious part of the colony, whose manners and mode of life are admirably described in this volume. It is true that this people has added nothing to the sum of political knowledge, and has neither originated nor followed new paths of philosophy or science. The interest that connects itself with them, such as it is, arises from the fact that this negative career was the very object for which they were created. Had they, like their English neighbors, led in the march of progress, and begun by discarding their old gods and their old creed, the scientific interest in them would be of a very different kind. As it is, they have completely realized the ideas of their founder. They are one of the few examples of a conservative triumph. The political and religious conceptions of the *Ancien Régime* were successfully propagated here, and even to-day the spirit of Louis XIV. might look down upon them with satisfaction and challenge mankind to show a more perfect community, according to those ideas of perfection which the Church and Legitimacy maintain.

As the colony itself is the centre of interest, so the public life of the colony is the principal object of study, as showing how the desired results were obtained. And here the industry of Mr. Parkman has left little to be asked. Every detail is presented that can throw light on the actions and motives of the actors. Necessarily one great factor of interest is wanting, since the people neither had nor claimed any share in the management of their affairs. The colony was an experiment destined to prove that the Crown and the Church were

more capable of conducting a good government than the people could be. It must be allowed that both the Crown and the Church did their duty faithfully and on the whole successfully. It is true that in the investigation Mr. Parkman has brought to light some facts in regard to the first Bishop of Quebec, Laval Montmorency, which will perhaps sound rather harshly to Canadians whose reverence for Laval is hardly less than that they feel for the most sacred names in Church history. Mr. Parkman incidentally shows that he was arbitrary and not always just; that he put incompetent men into office, and "made men charged with gross public offences the prosecutors and judges in their own cause." On the other hand, it must be allowed that in doing what he did he seems only to have acted according to his own ideas of public good, and quite within the accepted principles of the Church. Mr. Parkman's account of Laval is rather calculated to raise than to lower his reputation for worldly ability, whatever effect it may have upon his reputation as a Saint. But whatever may have been his shortcomings, he toiled devotedly for his people, and if he occasionally set the Church above the State, or uttered the sentiment so annoying to the governor d'Argenson, that "a bishop can do what he likes," he was still the most effective servant the king ever had in Canada; and Louis showed great wisdom in ignoring the faults he committed, and in sustaining him against the civil and military officials. If Canada owed much to Louis XIV., her principal debt was that he gave her Laval.

Of the episodes of adventure with which the volume abounds, less need be said. The public is familiar with Mr. Parkman's skill as a *raconteur*. But the reader's interest can only increase as Mr. Parkman goes on to give the public, as he alone can do, an account from the Canadian standpoint of those bloody wars with the English colonies, which, carried on as they were under great disadvantages of numbers and resources, can hardly fail to excite wonder and deep interest at Canadian energy and enterprise.

- 
2. — *Die Administration Andrew Jackson's in ihrer Bedeutung für die Entwicklung der Demokratie in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika.*  
 Von Dr. H. v. HOLST, o. ö. Professor an der Universität Freiburg.  
 Düsseldorf: Julius Buddeus. 1874.

THAT a German professor should think it worth while to establish a course of lectures on American History is a significant event to Americans. Not merely that it indicates the political importance of